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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/802,948	03/12/2001	Marco Nahmias Nanni	7040.0008.02	7866

22852 7590 06/18/2003

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EXAMINER

MAKI, STEVEN D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1733

DATE MAILED: 06/18/2003

12

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/802,948

Applicant(s)

NANNI ET AL.

Examiner

Steven D. Maki

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 March 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 22-47 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 22-47 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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1) The drawings are considered to be informal because they fail to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(a)(1) which requires black and white drawings using India ink or its equivalent.

Photographs and color drawings are acceptable only for examination purposes unless a petition filed under 37 CFR 1.84(a)(2) or (b)(1) is granted permitting their use as formal drawings. In the event applicant wishes to use the drawings currently on file as formal drawings, a petition must be filed for acceptance of the photographs or color drawings as formal drawings. Any such petition must be accompanied by the appropriate fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(i), three sets of drawings or photographs, as appropriate, and, if filed under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.84(a)(2), an amendment to the first paragraph of the brief description of the drawings section of the specification which states:

The file of this patent contains at least one drawing executed in color. Copies of this patent with color drawing(s) will be provided by the Patent and Trademark Office upon request and payment of the necessary fee.

Color photographs will be accepted if the conditions for accepting color drawings have been satisfied.

The petition under 37 CFR 1.84(b)(2) filed 3-25-03 has been received and is being forwarded to an SPE for a decision thereon.

2) An objection regarding the continuing data was made in paragraph 1 of the last office action. The objection in paragraph 1 of the last office action is withdrawn in view of applicant's arguments filed 3-25-03.

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3) The oath or declaration is defective. A new oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.67(a) identifying this application by application number and filing date is required. See MPEP §§ 602.01 and 602.02.

The oath or declaration is defective because:

It does not state that the person making the oath or declaration has reviewed and understands the contents of the specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to in the oath or declaration.

With respect to "reviewed and understand the contents", the declaration describes "the specification of which was filed as United States Application Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_ on March 13, 1998" (a 27 page specification with a black and white figure 6) which is not the same as the specification filed in this application (a 25 page specification with a color figure 6).

Applicant's arguments regarding the declaration are off point. The issue is not whether color figure 6 is or is not new matter. Instead, the issue is whether applicant has reviewed and understood the specification of this application. The specification of this application includes color figure 6. Applicant has provided no argument to the contrary. The declaration in this application contains no indication that applicant has reviewed and understood color figure 6. Also, note that the US serial number is not described in the declaration.

4) The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

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5) Claims 24-26 and 32-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. .

As to claims 24-26 and 32-34, the subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention (the new matter) is:

(1) in claims 24 and 32, the combination of the subject matter of the first composition including at least 40% by weight carbon black **and** about 31% by weight white filler,

(2) in claims 25 and 33, the combination of the subject matter of the first composition including at least 40% by weight carbon black **and** at least about 31% by weight white filler, and

(3) in claims 26 and 34, the combination of the subject matter of the first composition including at least 40% by weight carbon black **and** between 31% by weight and 60% by weight white filler”.

Although the original disclosure describes a single embodiment wherein the carbon black portion contains 31% silica (table 2 page 22), the original disclosure fails to reasonably convey the above noted combinations since for example, the original disclosure fails to describes using 31% white filler and 40% black filler in the first composition. For example: The black portion in figure

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2 describes 31% silica and 69% carbon black instead of at least at least 40% by weight carbon black and at least 31% by weight white filler”.

In claims 29 and 37, the subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention (the new matter) is: the subject matter of the at least first and second portions are not radially contiguous. The limitation of “not radially contiguous portions” is inconsistent with “axially contiguous portions”. Figure 1 of applicant’s disclosure for example clearly illustrates the first and second portions as being radially contiguous. The original disclosure fails to teach how to obtain axially contiguous portions which are not radially contiguous portions. Also, there is no definition of the negative limitation of “not radially contiguous” in the original disclosure.

Applicant argues that figure 1 shows portions A and B as being not radially contiguous. Applicant is incorrect because figure 1 shows portions A and B as being radially contiguous. Portions A and B contact each other along a butt joint - this butt joint extending in the radial direction.

6) Claims 22-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for “a difference between an amount of white filler in the first reinforcing filler and an amount of white filler in the second reinforcing filler achieves a tyre operating temperature lower than a reference temperature”, does not reasonably provide enablement for “a difference of compositions between the first and second portions achieves a tyre operating

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temperature lower than a reference temperature”. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make the invention commensurate in scope with these claims. The specification fails to teach how to achieve a tyre operating temperature lower than a reference temperature” by using different elastomers, accelerators, etc instead of different amounts of white filler.

7) The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

8) Claims 25-26, 29, 33-34, and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

As to claims 25 and 33, it is unclear if “at least about 31%” broadens the range in the independent claim or reads on percentages above 100%. If not, then the difference in scope between claims 25 and 26 is unclear and the difference in scope between claims 33 and 34 is unclear.

As to claims 29 (dependent on claim 22) and 37 (dependent on claim 30), the scope and meaning of “not radially contiguous” is unclear. Also, the subject matter of “not radially contiguous portions” in claims 29 and 37 is inconsistent with the subject matter of “axially contiguous portions” required by claims 22 and 30.

9) The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

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A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

10) The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Crawford et al

11) **Claims 22, 23, 27, 30, 31, 35, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45 and 46 are rejected under 35**

**U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Crawford et al (EP 732229).**

As to claims 22, 30 and 38, the first portion reads on the conductive carbon black layers and the second portion reads on the silica reinforced tread. The language of “circumferentially axially contiguous portions” fails to require the joint between the two portions to extend through the entire thickness of the tread. One of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand from (a) that the description tire rubber for a tread is typically reinforced with carbon black and with a minimal, if any, silica (page 2 lines 25-30) and (2) the outer tread cap (the conductive layer) “being primarily carbon black reinforced rubber composition” that the carbon black reinforced conductive layer may contain silica. The different tire operating temperature and the different hysteresis values are inherent in the tread of Crawford et al which has a **primarily carbon black reinforced section** (the conductive layer) and a **primarily silica reinforced section** (the silica tread / silica cap).

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Europe '452

12) **Claims 22-23, 27-31 and 35-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Europe '452 (Europe 658452) in view of Crawford et al (Europe 732229) and Europe '332 (EP 627332) and optionally Hess et al (US 3768537).**

Europe '452 discloses a tire having a tread comprising a “first conductive portion” (at least one conductive insert which contacts the ground) and a “second silica reinforced portion” (the remainder of the tread which contacts the ground). Europe '452 teaches that the “first portion” includes elastomer and a **high carbon black content** and that the “second portion” includes elastomer and **high silica content**. The portions are clearly axially contiguous and can be circumferential. Europe '452 teaches that the silica gives the tire reduced rolling resistance and better hysteretic features. Europe '452 teaches that the tire includes the tread, a carcass, beads and a belt. Europe '452 does not specifically recite including a minor amount of silica in the high carbon black containing conductive portion.

Europe '229, directed to silica reinforced treads, discloses a **silica reinforced tread** comprising 30-100 phr silica and optionally up to 20 phr carbon black and an **outer carbon black reinforced rubber tread cap** which is electrically conducting comprising 25 to 100 phr carbon black. See page 4. Europe '229 teaches that conventional tire rubber including its tread portion is “typically reinforced with carbon black reinforcing filler and with minimal, if any, of silica”. See page 2. Europe '229 teaches that by the term carbon black reinforced, “it is meant that the rubber components of the tire carcass rubber which are carbon black reinforced, contain a

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quantitative amount of carbon black reinforcement, normally at least 25 phr, and a minimal amount, if any, of silica and the weight ratio of carbon black to silica is at least 5/1". See page 2. Europe '229 teaches that the outer top cap layer is "primarily carbon black reinforced rubber composition".

Each of Europe '452 and Europe '229 solve the problem of electrostatic build up using the same solution of providing a **silica reinforced tread portion** with a **carbon black conducting portion**.

As to claims 22-23, 27-31 and 35-45, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the silica reinforced portion(s) and the conducting portion(s) [the insert(s)] of the tread of Europe '452 *such that* the **silica reinforced portion(s)** has reinforcing filler having at least 20% silica and a minor amount of carbon black, the **conducting carbon black reinforced portion (s)** has reinforcing filler having at least 40% carbon black and a minor amount of silica, *so that* a difference of compositions between the at least first and second portions achieves a tyre operating temperature lower than a reference temperature (claim 22) / the difference in amounts of white filler achieves a tyre operating temperature lower than a reference temperature (claim 30) / at least 10% hysteresis values (claim 38) *in view of*:

(a) Europe '452's teaching that the **silica reinforced portion** of the tread has high silica content and low carbon black content and the **conducting portion** in the tread is reinforced with carbon black,

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(b) Crawford's suggestion to provide a **silica reinforced portion** of a tread such that it comprises 30-100 phr silica and optionally up to 20 phr carbon black and a **conducting portion** of a tread (an outer carbon black reinforced rubber tread cap) such that it comprises 25 to 100 phr carbon black and a minimal amount, if any, of silica. Hess et al is optionally applied as evidence showing that it is well known in the tread art that silica reinforced treads well known to have reduced heat buildup (a tire having a silica reinforced tread thereby having a lower operating temperature). **The description regarding a lower tire working temperature / tire operating temperature fails to require compositions different than that suggested by the combination of Europe '452 and Crawford et al. There is no evidence of record showing that the claimed tire achieves a lower temperature than Europe '452;** it being emphasized that the tread of Europe '452 like the tread of applicant includes two circumferential axially contiguous portions of different compositions wherein one of the portions is **carbon black reinforced** whereas the other portion is **silica reinforced**.

*As to the claimed hollows and grooves*, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the tread of Europe '452 with grooves and hollows since (a) Europe '452 suggests providing the tread with circumferential grooves and transverse cutouts so as to define blocks in rows and (b) it is well known / conventional in the tread art to provide a tread with grooves and hollows to improve water draining and traction as evidenced for example by Europe '332 -Europe '332 teaching providing a tread with circumferential grooves and transverse

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grooves as shown in figure 1 so that the tire has efficient draining action of water and tractive features while also having low rolling noise.

Hence: Crawford (Europe '229) suggests including a minor amount of silica in the conducting portions of Europe '452 which are carbon black reinforced. **No unexpected results for some silica (instead of zero silica) in the carbon black first portion have been shown.** Europe '229 teaches using a tread containing 30-100 parts silica (white filler) *and* an outer tread cap containing 25-100 parts carbon black (black filler). In other words, Europe '229 teaches toward (instead of away from) a tread with a white portion *and* a black portion. One of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand from a fair reading of Europe '229, which includes the description of "said tread cap being primarily silica reinforced and said outer tread cap being primarily carbon black reinforced rubber composition" (page 6 lines 9-10, emphasis added) that Europe '229 suggests a first portion having 30-100 silica and a minor amount (0-20 parts) carbon black and a second portion having 25-100 parts carbon black and a minor amount silica.

Applicant has failed to provide any argument as to why "primarily" in the above quoted portion of Europe '229 must be read as --only-- so as to exclude inclusion of silica in the carbon black reinforced outer tread cap. Furthermore: Europe '452 and Europe '229, like applicant, disclose a tread having a **silica (white) reinforced portion (a white portion) and a carbon black reinforced portion (black portion).** Europe '452 and Europe '229, like applicant, disclose including a minor amount of carbon black in the silica reinforced portion. The disclosure in Europe '229 to use 30-100 parts silica (white filler) and 0-20 parts carbon black fairly suggests a

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substantial amount of silica (e.g. 100%) to thereby satisfy the limitation of at least 20% silica - applicant having provided no specific argument to the contrary. Europe '229, like applicant, suggests including a minor amount of silica in the carbon black reinforced portion. No **unexpected results over Europe '452 have been shown; it being emphasized that applicant obtains a reduced working temperature by using a white filler difference of at least 20% and that Europe '452 teaches a substantial white filler difference.**

**A substantial white filler difference between different axially contiguous tread sections is not novel.**

With respect the optional Europe '822, Europe '822's disclosure to use portions having carbon black and silica in a tread is consistent with Europe '229's teaching of "said outer tread cap being primarily carbon black reinforced rubber composition" (emphasis added).

As to dependent claims: As to claims 23 and 31, the claimed percentage of carbon black and white filler in the first composition would have been obvious in view of Europe '452's teaching to use silica reinforced tread (e.g. 100% silica). As to claims 27 and 35, the claimed difference would have been obvious in view of Europe '452's suggestion to use high silica content in the silica reinforced portion but not the conducting portion. As to claims 28-29 and 36-37, note the arrangement of the different tread portions illustrated in figure 1 or figure 2 of Europe '452.

As to claims 38-47, the claimed difference in hysteresis values would have been obvious since the applied prior art strongly suggests using a **primarily carbon black reinforced section**

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(conductive portion) and a **primarily silica reinforced section** (the silica tread); the optional Hess et al showing that silica treads have reduced hysteresis. The claimed widths and volumes would have been obvious in view of (a) Europe '452's teaching to use two or more conductors having a width of 2-50 mm for a tire tread (which conventionally has a width of 135 mm to about 285 mm). It is noted that such a width in mm suggests a width of upto 37%. This conclusion is consistent with the col. 2 line 61-col. 3 line 9 of US Patent 6540858 to Carette et al (US Patent 6540858 is not relied upon as prior art in this rejection but is mentioned *merely* because it has the same inventive entity as this application and thereby indicates that applicant of this application *apparently agrees* that Europe '452 suggests *a range of upto 37%* which overlaps the claimed range of greater than 30%). Also, the width of the conductive insert in Europe '452 corresponds to the percent volume of the insert in the tread since the insert extends through the entire thickness of the tread.

Takino et al

13) **Claims 38 and 40-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Takino et al (US 5225011).**

Claims 38 and 40-46 are anticipated by the figure 1 embodiment of Takino et al. The difference in hysteresis values is inherent in the figure 1 tread of Takino et al which uses different compositions as disclosed in tables 1, 2.

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Okazaki et al

14) **Claims 38-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okazaki et al (US 4385653) in view of Europe '931 (EP 681931) and Hess (US 3768537).**

Okazaki et al substantially teaches the claimed tire in that Okazaki et al suggests providing the **shoulder zone portion** of a tread with a high hysteresis and the **center zone portion** of a tread with a low hysteresis to obtain both great friction and low rolling resistance. As to claim 38, the claimed difference in hysteresis values would have been obvious in view of Okazaki et al's teaching to use different hysteresis values for the different zones to obtain both great friction and low rolling resistance. Furthermore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the claimed 20% + silica filler in the center zone and the claimed 40% + carbon black filler in the side zones since (a) Okazaki et al teaches that center zone should have low hysteresis and low rolling resistance, (b) Hess et al teaches that silica reinforced treads have low hysteresis and (c) Europe '931 teaches using 100% silica as the reinforcing filler for a center tread zone to obtain low rolling resistance and 100% carbon black in the shoulder zones to avoid static build up. As to claims 40-46, the claimed volumes and widths for the different portions would have been obvious in view of the widths and volumes for the center zone and shoulder zone suggested by Okazaki et al. As to claim 47, it would have been obvious to include a color pigment in the silica center zone since it is well known / conventional in the tread art to add pigment to a silica tread as evidenced by Hess et al so as to provide the tread with a desired color; only the expected results being obtained.

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15) **Claims 22, 24-30 and 32-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okazaki et al (US 4385653) in view of Hamada (US 5496883) and Europe '822 (EP 105822).**

Okazaki et al substantially teaches the claimed tire in that Okazaki et al suggests providing the **shoulder zone portion** of a tread with a high hysteresis and the **center zone portion** of a tread with a low hysteresis to obtain both great friction and low rolling resistance.

As to claim 38, the claimed difference in hysteresis values would have been obvious in view of Okazaki et al's teaching to use different hysteresis values for the different zones to obtain both great friction and low rolling resistance.

As to claims 22, 24-30 and 32-45 (independent claims being 22, 30 and 38), it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the claimed 20% + silica filler in the center zone and the claimed 40% + carbon black filler in the side zones (e.g. use at least 40% carbon black and at least 20% silica in each of the side zone and center zone portions) and since (a) Okazaki et al teaches that center zone should have low rolling resistance and less carbon black than the side zones, (b) Hamada et al suggests using, for the tire ground contacting surface of the tread, a tread composition having carbon black and silica as the reinforcing filler in a weight ratio of 95/5 to 10/90 to balance wet skid resistance, rolling resistance and wear resistance and (c) Europe '822's teaching to provide one layer of a tread having carbon black and silica with a different amount of carbon black and silica than that in a another layer of the tread so as to provide the layers with different properties of tear and cut resistance and heat resistance. The

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results in the specification are acknowledged. However, the results therein are not commensurate in scope with claims 22, 24-30 and 32-45, since claims 22, 24-30 and 32-35 merely require for example at least 20% white filler whereas the white blend in the example in the specification has 100% silica and the difference in amount silica between the white blend and the black blend is 69% (greater than 20%). In other words, claims 22, 24-30 and 32-45 read on using a minor percentage of silica (less than 50%) for the second portion whereas the example in the specification uses 100% silica in the second portion.

As to claims 24-26 and 32-34, the claimed percentages of silica would have been obvious in view of Hamada's teaching that the weight ratio of carbon black to silica can range from 95/5 to 10/90; it being emphasized that each of the claimed first portion and second portion can contain at least 31% silica and that at least 31% silica falls well within the percent silica range suggested by Hamada et al.

As to claims 27, 35 and 39, the claimed white filler difference would have been obvious in view of the above noted teaching in Okazaki et al to have different properties in the different zones and Europe '822's teachings regarding varying silica content from one tread portion to another tread portion.

As to claims 28-29 and 36-37, note figure 1.

As to claims 40-44, the claimed volumes and widths for the different portions would have been obvious in view of the widths and volumes for the center zone and shoulder zone suggested by Okazaki et al.

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As to claim 45, note the suggestion in the secondary art to use silica in combination with carbon black.

16) REMARKS

Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 22-47 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

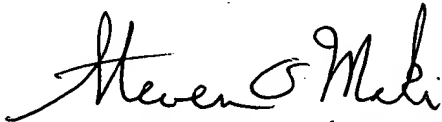
Applicant's arguments filed 3-12-01 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The terminal disclaimer filed 3-25-03 is proper and has been recorded. Accordingly, the obvious type double patenting rejection has been withdrawn.

17) No claim is allowed.

18) Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven D. Maki whose telephone number is (703) 308-2068. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Ball, can be reached on (703) 308-2058. The fax phone number for Art Unit 1733 is (703) 872-9310 (for before final) or (703) 872-9311 (for after final). Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

Steven D. Maki  
June 16, 2003

  
STEVEN D. MAKI  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
~~GROUP 1300~~  
A 1733 6-16-03